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Message Text

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TO CINCEUR IMMEDIATE
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HQ USEUCOM IMMEDIATE
CINCUSNAVEUR IMMEDIATE
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CINCUSAREUR IMMEDIATE
COMSIXTHFLT IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS - MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOL REPEAT ANKARA 5726 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ATHENS NICOSIA
ADANA ISTANBUL IZMIR USUN NATO JULY 26, 1976

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5726

EXDIS

DEPT PASS TO FOLLOWING MILITARY ADDRESSEES: CINCEUR,
USDOCOSOUTH, USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST, USNMR SHAPE, CINCUSNAVEUR,
CINCUSAFE/IN, CINCUSAFE/INCFR, HQ USEUCOM, CINCUSAREUR,
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SUBJECT: TURKISH-GREEK EFFORTS TO RESOLVE SISMIK PROBLEM

REF: ANKARA 5725

1. SHORTLY AFTER MY MEETING WITH MFA SECGEN ELEKDAG (REFTEL), I HAD A FOLLOWUP MEETING WITH GREEK AMBASSADOR COSMADOPOULOS. LATTER GAVE ME A LESS DETAILED ACCOUNT OF LAST WEEK'S NEGOTIATIONS BUT CONFIRMED ESSENCE OF WHAT ELEKDAG HAD REPORTED EARLER. SPECIFICALLY, HE CONFIRMED THAT THERE WERE NOW TWO STUMBLING BLOCKS: FIRST, THE ISSUE OF A GREEK NAVAL VESSEL " ESCORTING" THE SISMIK; AND SECOND, THE QUESTION OF THE TURKS' REVEALING NOW TO THE GREEKS THE ENTIRE EXPLORATION PROGRAM THAT THE GOT HAD IN MIND FOR THE SISMIK OVER THE WEEKS AND/OR MONTHS AHEAD.

2. COSMADOPOULOS CONFIRMED MY OWN IMPRESSION THAT THE "ESCORT" PROBLEM IS THE LESS SERIOUS OF THE TWO. COSMADOPOULOS HIMSELF USED THE TERM "SHADOW" AT ONE POINT IN OUR CONVER-SATION, WHILE LATER ON EMPLOYING THE WORD "ESCORT". HE IMPLIED THAT IF THE "NOTICE" PROBLEM COULD BE RESOLVED, THE "ESCORT" PROBLEM COULD ALSO BE SETTLED. HE COMMENTED THAT GIVEN THE AREA THE SHIP WOULD BE IN, MODERN RADAR AND GREEK MILITARY PLANS ON ROUTINE FLIGHTS, NOT TO MENTION SUBMARINES, COULD EASILY KEEP TRACK OF THE SISMIK IN A RATHER UNOBTRUSIVE WAY. HE DID NOT RPT NOT SAY THAT THIS WOULD BE WHAT THE GREEKS WOULD ACCEPT, BUT HE CLEARLY IMPLIED A PERSONAL VIEW THAT THE MATTER COULD BE RESOLVED IN THIS WAY IF THE MORE IMPORTANT "NOTICE" PROBLEM COULD BE RESOLVED.

3. AS FOR THE "NOTICE" PROBLEM, COSMADOPOULOS CONCEDED THAT HE HAD SENT THE EARLIER AGREEMENT THAT HE HAD WORKED OUT WITH ELEKDAG (REFTEL) BACK TO ATHENS AD REFERENDUM WITHOUT INSISTING ON THE NOTICE PROVISION THAT ATHENS NOW WANTED. (INSTEAD HE HAD ACCEPTED THE SEVEN-DAY NOTICE TO MARINERS DEVICE, ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZED THAT THIS WAS A TURK PLOY TO NOTIFY EVERYONE RATHER THAN SOLELY THE GREEKS ABOUT THE SISMIK'S PROJECTED COURSE.) HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT ATHENS WAS INSISTENT ON ITS NOTICE PROPOSAL BECAUSE IN THE GOG VIEW THE STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH THAT CAGLAYANGIL WAS PROPOSING, I.E. PERIODIC NOTICES TO MARINERS, COULD BE REGARDED AS A CONFIDENTIAL

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TURKISH PROBING EXERCISE, EACH WEEK FURTHER EXPLORING AND TESTING GREEK TOLERANCES WITH THE POSSIBILITY THAT IT COULD END UP IN A BRINKSMANSHIP GAME. ATHENS WAS INSISTING ON AVOIDING THIS POSSIBILITY, SAID COSMADOPOULOS. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE STRESSED TO ME THAT IN HIS TALKS WITH THE TURKS HE HAD EMPHASIZED THAT THE OVERALL PLAN THAT THE GOG WAS ASKING FOR COULD BE IN VERY GENERAL TERMS, AND MORE-OVER WAS BEING REQUESTED NOT AS AN IMPLICATION OF GREEK SOVEREIGNTY

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BUT AS A DEVICE TO AVOID FUTURE DIFFICULTIES AND CONFRONTATIONS.
HE ADDED THAT HE HAD AS A "SWEETENER" ALSO BEEN AUTHORIZED
BY ATHENS TO SAY THAT IF THE TURKS AGREED TO A GENERAL
ACCOUNTING IN ADVANCE OF THE ENTIRE SISMIK PROGRAM, THE
GREEKS WOULD AGREE TO CAGLAYANGIL'S STATEMENT REFERRING
TO SISMIK EXPLORATION AS SEISMIC, NOT SIMPLY SCIENTIFIC EX-
PLORATION -- A BONE OF CONTENTION IN THE EARLIER ELEKDAG-
COSMADOPOULOS NEGOTIATIONS.

4. I ASKED COSMADOPOULOS WHERE THINGS STOOD NOW,
INDICATING THAT ELEKDAG IMPLIED THAT THE TALKS WERE AT A
STANDSTILL. HE CONFIRMED THAT NO NEW NEGOTIATIONS WERE
SCHEDULED AND HE SEEMED TO FEEL THAT AT THE MOMENT NEW EFFORTS
TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM WERE UNLIKELY TO EMANATE FROM EITHER
SIDE. HE ADDED THAT HE FELT THAT THE MOOD OF THE PRESENT
TURKISH GOVERNMENT HAD CHANGED CONSIDERABLY AS A RESULT OF
THE BITTER ATTACKS LAUNCHED BY ECEVIT IN THE LAST FEW DAYS ON
THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT FOR ITS ALLEGED MODERATION IN THIS
DISPUTE -- A POINT WHICH SQUARES DIRECTLY WITH WHAT ELEKDAG
HAD IMPLIED TO ME A FEW HOURS EARLIER. ON THE OTHER HAND,
WE HAVE SOME TIME, HE SAID, AT LEAST SEVEN DAYS,
BEFORE THIS PROBLEM WILL COME TO A HEAD. OUR CONVERSATIONN
ENDED WITH MY CONGRATULATING HIM ON LAST WEEK'S EFFORTS AND
SAYING IT WOULD BE A TRAGEDY -- HAVING COME SO FAR IN
RESOLVING THIS DIFFICULT PROBLEM -- TO STOP SHORT NOW WHEN THE
WORST OF THE NEGOTIATING DIFFICULTIES SEEMED TO
HAVE BEEN SURMOUNTED.

5. COMMENT: AS RECOMMENDED IN ANKARA 5636 I CONTINUE TO FEEL IT
WOULD BE USEFUL FOR THE DEPARTMENT (AT THE ASST SECRETARY LEVEL
OR HIGHER) TO WEIGH IN WITH BOTH SIDES IN ORDER TO UNDERSCORE
IN WASHINGTON OUR CONTINUING CONCERN OVER THIS SITUATION. AS THE
PARTIES SEEM TO BE WORKING TOWARD AN ACCOMMODATION, I WOULD
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THINK AT THIS POINT OUR DEMARCHE SHOULD SIMPLY CONSIST OF
AN EXPRESSION OF GRATIFICATION OVER THE PROGRESS THEY HAVE
MADE IN THEIR MOST RECENT DISCUSSIONS AND VIGOROUS ENCOURAGEMENT
TO NOW MAKE A SERIOUS AND SUSTAINED EFFORT TO RESOLVE THE
REMAINING PROBLEMS. MACOMBER

UNQUOTE. KISSINGER

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